
Service at the Secondary Level

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SCHOOL LIBRARY service at the secondary level has developed through various forms and stages for over one hundred years. It did not spring up automatically with the high school, nor was it sponsored by librarians alone. It has had periods of rapid development and of slow growth. Changes in educational philosophy and further understanding of reading through research have also influenced the evolution of the school library program. The literature of the subject shows a gradual but distinct shift of function from that of providing a reference collection of books to a plan which helps bring about alterations in student behavior.

The twofold purpose of this paper is to emphasize current trends in school library service, and to point out problems worthy of further research. While a short historical background is included, the main body of the paper presents modern aspects of services to students, teachers, and administrators—reading guidance, social guidance, vocational guidance, and services to the community. In the summary and conclusion appear the matters suggested for future research.

The history of school libraries has not been completely written; there are many primary references yet to be found which will give a clearer picture of the library in the school, but sketches of the development appear in Wofford's article, "School Library Evolution"¹ and in Cecil and Heaps' *School Library Service in the United States*.² The first steps were taken when a number of states passed laws, beginning in 1835, allowing voters to levy a tax for a collection of books to be housed in a school district. Since the laws were only permissive, many of the states did not tax themselves for funds. Leaders in education, one of whom was Horace Mann, became interested in the providing of books for schools; their plan was to obtain state aid for the establishment of libraries in school districts. Again many states did not follow through.

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In Illinois the first Superintendent of Public Instruction, taking office in 1854 was interested in securing books for the schools, but due to the great indebtedness of the state it was decided that personal interest should be enlisted for local support rather than state aid. For those states which did vote money to the school district library, the results took the form of public libraries administered by school districts and supported by public funds. The collections of books so purchased were not used functionally for the students in the schools.

However, as the public libraries grew, their services began to be extended to the schools. The period of 1876 to 1900 was marked by this. Then leaders in library service, such as Melvil Dewey, began to see the need for school collections. They were influential in the passing of a New York State school law, in 1892, which "designated the school library as a part of school equipment with space in the school building, and required that it provide books for reference work, recreational reading for pupils, and professional books for teachers."¹ It is interesting to note that this particular development paralleled the shift in emphasis from formal teaching to learning through student activity. In 1895 Katharine L. Sharp³ advocated the free use of libraries in her pronouncement, "The first element of a successful school library is to grant free access to the shelves."

The turn of the century brought an emphasis on personnel. The first graduate of a library school to accept a position as high school librarian was Mary Kingsbury at the Erasmus High School in Brooklyn, New York, in 1900. It is to be noted that her training unavoidably had been pointed toward public library work, there being no curriculum organized then with stress on the services expected of the school library.

The literature for the period of 1910 through 1920 showed a definite interest on the part of educational and library organizations in the development of school libraries. Educators and librarians were working for a new conception of the high school library—"an attractive room with necessary equipment, an adequate collection of books, selected with the needs of the curriculum in mind, under the supervision of a trained librarian."⁴ There were allusions to the need for a reference library, or a laboratory for collateral reading, to supplement study of the texts. Some attention also was being devoted to recreational and inspirational reading.^{5, 6} The ideas of library service then current were rather static, but historically important. In 1911 the Library Department of the National Education Association designated a committee on high school libraries. The National Council of Teachers of English

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in 1914 appointed a standing committee on the same subject. Also in that year the School Libraries Section of the American Library Association was organized. Two committees of this section started to work on secondary school library administration and on the professional training of the school librarian. By 1920 a survey had been completed, and the Certain Report providing national standards for secondary school libraries had been adopted by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools and approved by the Committee on Education of the American Library Association.

The activity of school librarians from 1920 through the late 1930's is characterized by acquiring and organizing of library materials and meeting the needs of the school curriculum. The writings of the 1920's describe rather fully technical duties, details of management, publicity, "fighting the cheap and sensational in print,"⁷ the need for a picture collection, the place of a vertical file, the value of library lessons, and the importance of library quarters.⁸ Before the turn of the decade such terms as "browsing corners," "reading for a purpose," "guidance," even "mental growth and development," began to appear. However, some of these concepts were evident only in the thinking of the leaders, for when results of the study by B. Lamar Johnson⁹ were published in 1933, it appeared that 262 of the 352 principals, teacher-librarians, and librarians considered the main functions of the library to be the enrichment of the curriculum and the supplying of reference material. Only 10 thought the high school library could assist in the guidance program of the school. It is interesting to note that in *Library Literature, 1933-1935*, there were 50 entries under the subject of "Relations with Teachers and Curriculum," 11 of which were found in state and educational periodicals, and that in *Library Literature, 1949-1951*, there were 88 such entries, with 62 coming from state periodicals. The noticeable growth in articles written on this subject would tend to show that it still holds a place in the thinking of many school librarians; and the increased number from state periodicals would testify that in practice and in the minds of many people the most important function of the school library still is to supply books to meet the needs of the curriculum and the teachers.

Significantly there have been creeping into print, during the last fifteen years, broader aspects of school library service. Such terms as "cumulative guidance records,"¹⁰ "social functions,"¹¹ "providing individual service to individual children thru reading guidance,"¹² and "criteria by which the service or use of the library may be evaluated in

terms of pupil behavior"¹³ suggest the character of a new pattern of school library service.

It is important then, that these aspects be studied in order to understand the various contributions of the modern secondary school library. It has always been supposed that some type of service would be granted to students, but the points of view concerning this changed somewhat during the years. Until about 1930 two main functions seemed important, namely, that of buying books and reference materials and that of teaching the use of library tools in concise, formal lessons.¹⁴⁻¹⁶ Such emphasis was normal when money, time, and effort were being expended just to acquire library facilities and materials. But by 1939 Feeney¹⁷ began to write about using library resources in a different way. She was particularly concerned about the selecting of materials that would affect the student's thinking. She wanted those presenting national and world problems of this country, future working conditions, "and last, but not least, [materials] to encourage, foster, sponsor the open mind." Here for the first time, is the belief that library stock and skill in using it are only means to an end. Library resources should be employed to train students to reason, to think, and to make decisions based upon reliable information. Furthermore, they should be evaluated in terms of resulting change in student behavior. Cutright and Peckham,¹⁸ Linderman,¹⁹ Fargo,²⁰ and Hefley²¹ also wrote in this vein during the 1940's.

By 1951 three valuable and different kinds of publications further developed the idea. In preparing the first of these, school librarians of Illinois were asked by the leaders of the Illinois Curriculum Program to describe the part of the school library in reinforcing national security. The following quotation indicates that one of the ways to use library material is "Helping pupils to acquire the ability to interpret and evaluate accurately and critically what they read, see, and hear, [this being] essential in detecting and appraising propaganda."²² The document also mentions the importance of teaching the use of the resources of the library, in order that the student may satisfy his interests and needs.

*A Planning Guide for the High School Library Program*²³ also emphasizes the current trend of teaching the integrated use of library materials to students. It recommends that teachers and librarians share the responsibility for this. It is suggested that the librarians give the orientation lessons, with the teachers handling the other instruction as needed in the various subject fields. It is further advised that "In

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schools where curriculum study or revision is taking place the librarian should indicate where instruction in the use of library resources can be integrated in the various subject fields."²⁴

The third recent statement that appears to substantiate the expanded concept of use of library materials came from the International Federation of Secondary Teachers' Association, Amsterdam, Holland, August 1950. The teachers went on record as "believing that books are of first importance, since they provide the material essential to the training of the individual to think for himself and achieve the power of independent judgment." The group further emphasized its position by including in its resolutions the statement, "As the school library exists for the pupil, it is essential that he should have free access to it and that he should be given a part in its management."²⁵

The last part of this quotation includes another type of service, that of providing activities and responsibilities of educational value. The literature on the subject describes flourishing library clubs, the organization of student library staff groups, and library committees of the student council. However, these things are not necessarily new. It is suggested that more recognition be granted to students' opinions with regard to the selection of books and with respect to governing themselves. This appears also in the work of Linderman,¹⁹ Goslin and Gilchrist,²⁶ Sanford,²² and Henne.²⁷

Although it was evident from the beginning that libraries should provide books for students, it has only been within the last ten years that materials in the form of 16 mm. films, filmstrips, recordings, slides, and other audio-visual tools have been included. Coulbourn,²⁸ Gray,²⁹ Fargo,³⁰ Rufsvold,³¹ and Sanford²² write of the acquisition and use of these materials in libraries which serve students and faculty. It would seem that the current trend in respect to library service to students would include the acquisition and use of all types of materials for the purpose of meeting the needs, interests, and desires of the students, and in order that desirable change in student behavior might take place.

The school library also has a responsibility to the faculty and administration. In 1928 library service to them included only the making of bibliographies for the teachers, and knowing materials well enough to furnish recommendations.¹⁴ In the Johnson study,⁹ of 1933, only 24 of 352 principals, teacher-librarians, and librarians thought the high school library ought to serve the teachers. From the middle of the 1930's through 1945, however, Kersey,³² Lathrop,³³ Cundiff,³⁴ Coul-

bourne,²⁸ and Linderman¹⁹ discuss the following ways the school librarian can aid the teachers and administrators: (1) making them aware of the library and its facilities; (2) helping with curriculum development; (3) soliciting and accepting suggestions for the books; (4) sending notices of new books and materials; (5) helping prepare lists for units in courses; (6) reporting student interests and reading habits; (7) providing an up-to-date professional collection of books and magazines; (8) visiting classes and being interested in the method of presentation of materials; and (9) meeting with and talking to departmental groups about their needs. As was mentioned before, service to teachers and administrators is receiving much current attention in state periodicals describing practice. The subject receives particular attention in the papers of Goslin and Gilchrist,²⁶ Sanford,³⁵ and *A Planning Guide for the High School Library Program*.²³ Providing materials centers and curriculum laboratories for the teachers is just beginning to be noted. The Bennett study³⁶ recommends that such centers be placed in various regions of the state, so that no teacher would be too far from one. Greer and Heller³⁷ recommend them, but with a warning that administrators may not realize the significance of the library in such a program. Therefore, a major current trend in school library service is the attention that is being given to the use and understanding of the library on the part of the faculty and administration, and to the providing of materials laboratories for the observation and circulation of books and other educational aids on a regional basis.

The third important area of service is reading guidance, but it is not apparent from either the quantity or the quality of writing on this subject that it is receiving the emphasis due it in the established library. From the early studies and literature Gray²⁹ points out that before 1910 the dominant aim in the teaching of reading was recognition and the appreciation of literary quality. By 1925 the emphasis had shifted in the classroom to the teaching of reading by the silent method and to the stimulation of reading for pleasure and information. At the same time librarians were also concerned with encouraging students to read for information, for recreation, and for inspiration. This is seen in the writings of Hall,⁶ Arnett,³⁸ and Witmer³⁹ as they describe the functions of the high school library. These concepts, however, were considered at that time as being distinct from each other. One presumably did not get pleasure from reading for information. The basis for

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the stimulation of reading was to get the student to read good books, or the literary masterpieces.

It was not until the latter part of the 1920's that consideration for the interest of the child began to appear. It was evident, though, that the idea of reading based on student interest was not yet put into practice, for in the Johnson study⁹ 244 of the 352 principals, teacher-librarians, and librarians thought the library should provide for leisure-time reading but showed no thought for the interests of the individual child. Reading was from prescribed lists. Finally, when the schools did begin to build their philosophy and curriculum upon the needs of the individual child, it became necessary to determine the influence reading had upon him. The writings of Martin,⁴⁰ Rugg,⁴¹ Judd,⁴² Smith,⁴³ and Strang⁴⁴ show the change in emphasis from the setting up of a mere reading program to the development of a teaching, reading, and library plan based on the needs, abilities, and interests of readers, and on its possible results in thinking and behavior.

More recently Henne,⁴⁵ Berelson,⁴⁶ and the *Planning Guide*²³ stress the need for librarians to know the basic reading techniques used with children, and to be familiar with the types of reading tests given and with the evaluation of the reading scores. Librarians, according to these writers, should also know adolescent psychology well enough to realize the developmental tasks to be accomplished by the students, and they should be sufficiently conversant with the books and materials to identify the developmental values in them. Information from the cumulative records of the student should be available, and used by the librarian in order to understand the student's background, abilities, and needs. Reading guidance in all its ramifications as defined today is much more inclusive than that of twenty years ago. It is built upon the behavior which could come in the individual, and upon the cooperation of the librarian with every teacher to bring about the best results. This constitutes the thinking of the leaders, but since there are few articles on the subject coming from the state periodicals, it could be assumed that it is only beginning to come into practice in some of the libraries. To summarize, the growing trend in reading guidance as a service activity of the high school library rests on the necessity to understand the interests, needs, and abilities of students, and to know the books and materials well enough to use them in a definite reading program with as many individual students as possible.

With the emphasis of the educational program upon the development of the whole child there evolved various types of guidance pro-

grams. One of these could be called social guidance, which helps the student to understand himself in relationship to group organizations and in respect to living in the home, in the school, and in the community. The role of the high school library program here is gradually emerging. In 1923 Certain ⁴⁷ wrote of activity with library materials as a means of promoting good citizenship and group unity, but not until about twenty years later did the concept receive much emphasis. For a long time training for citizenship was encouraged, but social guidance was not spelled out in concern about attitudes toward minority groups, respect for materials and facilities to be used by others, self government, and the adopting and sharing of responsibilities. Now the idea is finding its place. Activities of the school library in this field also include providing materials on personality development and sex education. It is even being suggested that the library is a social laboratory as no other part of the school can be. Such thinking is prominent in the writings of Fargo ⁴⁸ and Sanford,³⁵ and the *Planning Guide*.²³

Another type of guidance receiving attention is that relating to vocations. This is not new to the high school library, for in the early literature it was emphasized that up-to-date information on vocations was needed in both books and pamphlets. The published matter on the subject is not abundant, but appears consistently with treatment of the important services to students which need to be provided by the school library.

One of the newest aspects of responsibility for the high school library is the service it could offer to the reader in the community outside the school. Chaim ⁴⁹ would like to have the materials for day and night classes for adults provided by the school library, and have them furnished at the time the classes are in session. In Sanford ⁵⁰ it is recommended that where "public library facilities are not adequate, the school should give serious consideration to making its library resources available to the adults and children of preschool age." The discussion so far is not extensive enough to qualify this service as a trend, but it may indicate a future line of work for the school library.

In summary, one might say that books have been considered necessary to the teaching program of schools from the early days in American education, but that libraries in schools have developed rather recently, and first in high schools. The modern concept of library work has been gradually changing. Concern over library housekeeping has given way to that over services to students and faculty. Service to students means the acquiring and using of all kinds of tools most needed

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by the students. Materials are chosen not because they represent the classics, or because they appear on required reading lists, but because they have positive qualities and because they will probably bring about desirable change in student behavior. They are chosen to meet individual needs, interests, and abilities. Library services to students also include the teaching of the use of library resources, in order that the student will be able to find information quickly and carry on independent study successfully. Such training embraces guidance in helping students to read and think critically, i.e., to evaluate the materials they read, see, or hear. The activities of library clubs, placing of students on library staff, and library committees of the student council are included in services to students.

These are the trends, but there are some problems to be studied. What are the most effective ways of teaching the use of library materials to make integration complete? Recommendations have been brought forward, but scientific research with controlled groups may produce further valuable results. The content that renders materials useful needs further investigation. What are the factors in the film or book which supposedly bring about decision and growth of personality? How can these factors be best presented to get the most desirable results? When the activity program of the library is studied, it would seem desirable to check for educational values in each activity. Does each organization with its program help students develop into responsible citizens?

The service to the faculty and administrator includes providing a professional library, keeping them informed of new materials, asking their selections for new books, reporting student behavior and reading abilities to them, and obtaining materials that they may want for their own study. The librarian helps as resource person for the curriculum development committee. The organization of curriculum and materials centers is a new part of this program. A problem which bears study here is the organization and influence of the centers. What should go into them? Where should they be located? Who should direct them? Who would benefit most by them? Who would be responsible for them financially?

Reading guidance, another service just coming into its own in school libraries, is shifting emphasis from reading for its own sake to reading meant to bring about change in student behavior. It is the responsibility of the librarian to know about reading techniques, reading tests, as well as reading interests and abilities of students, and to

foster or to cooperate in a definite reading program on the part of the school. There remain, however, many problems to be studied. Case studies should be made on what students read, and why they read. More information should be gained about their sources for books. By what means do students gain information if they do not read? What are the handicaps that hinder students' reading? Do home, geographic, or ethnic groupings have any influence on the amount and kind of students' reading? Are there other influences in the school outside the library which affect the reading of students?

Social guidance has acquired a new status in the school library. Here student attitudes are molded in respect to the use of the library facilities and materials. Such guidance is also concerned with development of attitudes the student has about himself and his responsibility to the community. It regards the library as a social laboratory, which provides the atmosphere and facilities for such training. Studies concerning home backgrounds, working conditions, and organizations of the community would help the librarian in offering it. Finally, vocational guidance should be included as a part of the library's program. In the main, it consists of providing for students and faculty up-to-date, accurate information about careers. One problem for study in connection with guidance would be that of collecting and interpreting follow-up data on the training and the occupations engaged in by the alumni of the school. Another study would be of the community, to identify the main source of income of the families and the types of work available for students. All of the questions for investigation specified above have included not only those which the student of research can study, but also those which the school librarian can carry on and should carry on before the library services adequately meet the needs of students.

The high school's responsibility to the community reader outside the school has not been crystallized. Library services are being suggested for those communities without public library facilities. School libraries at the secondary level are carrying on an active program in helping the school reach its objectives. With further study of the problems included in this paper, they ought to be able not only to adapt their contributions more effectively to assist the student, but to extend their usefulness beyond the school walls.

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